

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

In response to the final Office Action dated June 7, 2006, Applicant filed a response on August 1, 2006 and a Request for Continued Examination on September 7, 2006. Further, please enter the above amendment to the claims.

In the final Office Action, Claims 1, 2, 4-14, 16-25, and 36-44 are pending. Claims 1, 2, 4, and 10-14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 4,882,823 to Weisert, et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,024,369 to Froes, et al. Claims 5-9, 16-25, and 36-44 are rejected under § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Weisert, et al. in view of Froes, et al. and in further view of U.S. Patent No. 5,118,026 to Stacher.

Independent Claims 1, 16, and 36 are amended above. Dependent Claims 13-14, 24-25, and 43-44 are cancelled, and various dependent claims are amended accordingly. As amended, Claim 1 recites that the method includes providing two blanks, each of which has a grain size of between 0.8 and 1.2 micron. Each blank is heated to within a diffusion bonding temperature range, and the blanks are diffusion bonded at a diffusion bonding temperature of less than 1450 °F. The bonded blanks are heated to within a superplastic forming temperature range and superplastically forming at a forming temperature of less than 1450 °F. Independent Claims 16 and 36 include similar features. The cited references, either alone or in fair combination, do not teach or suggest the claimed invention. Further, the dependent claims provide additional bases of distinction over the cited references, as set forth in Applicant's Reply filed August 1, 2006.

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CONCLUSION

In view of the claim amendments presented above, Applicant submits that the present application is in condition for allowance. As such, the issuance of a Notice of Allowance is therefore respectfully requested. In order to expedite the examination of the present application, the Examiner is encouraged to contact Applicant's undersigned attorney in order to resolve any remaining issues.

It is not believed that extensions of time or fees for net addition of claims are required, beyond those that may otherwise be provided for in documents accompanying this paper. However, in the event that additional extensions of time are necessary to allow consideration of

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this paper, such extensions are hereby petitioned under 37 CFR § 1.136(a), and any fee required therefore (including fees for net addition of claims) is hereby authorized to be charged to Deposit Account No. 16-0605.

Respectfully submitted,



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